

REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 11-14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Do. The claims presently recite a chromium layer that is adjacent to and diffuses into a top layer of magnetic material. As discussed on page 7 of the application, the diffused chromium magnetically decouples the grains of the magnetic material and reduces the noise within the disk. Do does not teach or suggest to provide a chromium layer that diffuses into the top magnetic material as recited in the claims. Do merely states that ruthenium or chromium can be used as a spacer material. In the embodiment discussed on column 8, lines 18-22, Do discloses a spacer adjacent to the top magnetic material 56 as being constructed from ruthenium. Do does not disclose or suggest that the spacer 56 be constructed from a chromium that diffuses into the top magnetic layer as recited in the claims of the above-entitled application. For these reasons the applicant submits that Do does not render obvious claims 1-4 and 11-14.

The Examiner rejected claims 5 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Do in view of Shimizu. The applicant submits that these claims are allowable for being dependent upon allowable independent claims.

The Examiner rejected claims 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Do in view of Bian. For the reasons stated above, the applicant does not believe that either Do or Bian render obvious claims 6-9.

The Examiner rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Do in view of Bian, in further view of Shimizu. The applicant submits that this claim is allowable for being dependent upon an allowable independent claim.

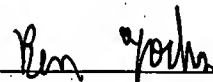
In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration of the rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1-15 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

IRELL & MANELLA LLP

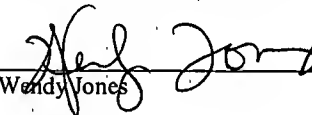
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Wendy Jones
Date 9/22/03